

REMARKS

A request for continued examination is submitted herewith.

Claims 39, 41-42, 68-69 and 74 have been rejected as being anticipated by Spiering, U.S. Patent No. 4,682,691 ("Spiering"), and claims 39, 41-42, 68-69, 71, 73 and 74 have been rejected as being anticipated by Mates, U.S. Patent No. 3,464,094 ("Mates"). In addition, claims 44-46, 70 and 72 have been rejected as being obvious over either Spiering or Mates alone, and claim 39 has been rejected as being obvious over either Spiering or Mates in view of Kurtz et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,692,674 ("Kurtz").

Claims 39, 42 and 43 have been amended, and claim 75 is new. The amendments to the claims are fully supported by the originally filed claims and the Specification, as is the newly added claim. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections in light of the amendments to the claims, and the following remarks.

Applicants submit that none of the references disclose forming a plurality of lanes having edges, and *joining the lanes side-by-side along their edges to provide a composite polymeric sheet*, as claim 39 now requires. Furthermore, none of the references alone, or in any combination, would have led someone of ordinary skill in the art to Applicants' claimed fasteners because the references do not recognize the advantages of *joining lanes side-by-side along their edges to provide a composite polymeric sheet*.

Applicants' methods can, e.g., produce fasteners that are stretchable, allowing the fasteners to be "pre-loaded" prior to engagement with loops. Such pre-loading allows the hooks of the fasteners to "bite into" a loop pile as the load is removed from the fastener and the fastener attempts to return to its unstretched state. This phenomenon can, e.g., allow for a particularly strong engagement of the fasteners with loops, particularly with low-lying and sparse loop fields, such as those that are often on disposable diapers. In addition, Applicants' methods can also, e.g., produce fasteners that have soft edges and/or lanes that shroud hooks, which can reduce discomfort to a wearer of the fastener. These concepts are illustrated, e.g., in FIGS. 8F, 8G and 15B of the Applicants' Specification, which are reproduced below. FIG. 8F shows a stretchable diaper tab 81 having alternating lanes of a rigid thermoplastic and a stretchable thermoplastic, while FIG. 8G shows a diaper carrying such a tab. FIG. 15B is a cross-sectional view of a

fastener component having lanes 100 of a rigid material having hooks 104 extending therefrom alternating with lanes 102 of a soft foam material. The fastener component has edges that are soft to the touch of a human finger 70.

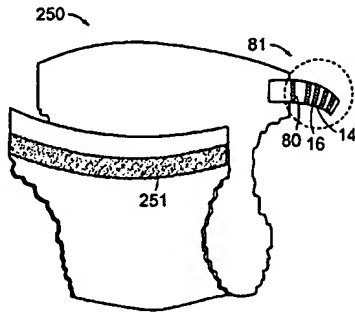


FIG. 8G

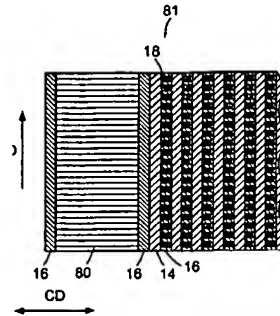


FIG. 8F

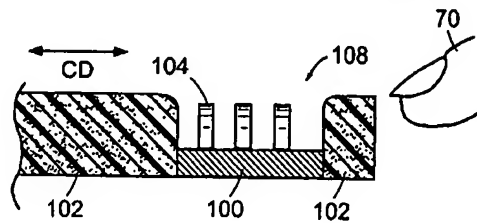


FIG. 15B

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Spiering (see FIG. 2 below) describes a roll up tool carrier that includes a sheet material 12 having complementary adhesive strips 26, 28 and 30, 32 on opposite sides the sheet material. Tools (such as the screwdriver shown) can be attached to the carrier, and then the carrier can be rolled up to protect the tools (and a user from injury). The shape of the roll is maintained by the adhesive action of the complementary adhesive strips on opposite sides of the sheet material.

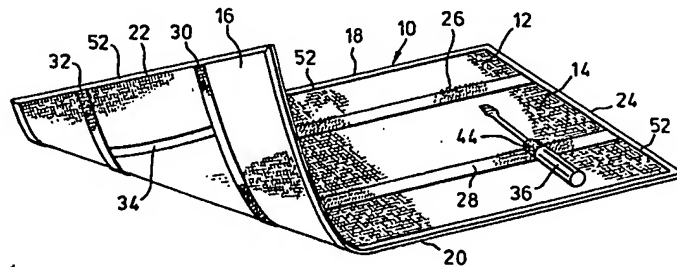
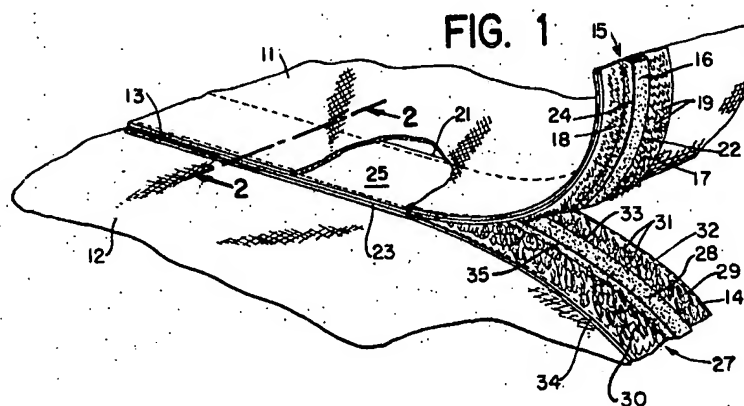


FIG. 2

Spiering

Mates (see FIG. 1 below) describes a fluid-tight closure assembly. In particular, Mates describes two sheet members (11 and 12), each having an elongated strip of soft compressible material (16), such as polyurethane or foam rubber. One of the sheets has loops proximate the strip of compressible material (16), while the other sheet has hooks proximate the compressible material. When the two sheets are mated, a water tight seal is formed due to the face-to-face assembly of the complementary compressible materials.



Mates

Kurtz (see FIG. 3 below) describes sheet-form fasteners that have discrete fastener regions. In some embodiments, Kurtz accomplishes making such fasteners by covering portions of the mold roll (16) with a sleeve (32) made of a compliant material, the hooks being formed only in the uncovered portions of the mold roll that contact a molten resin.

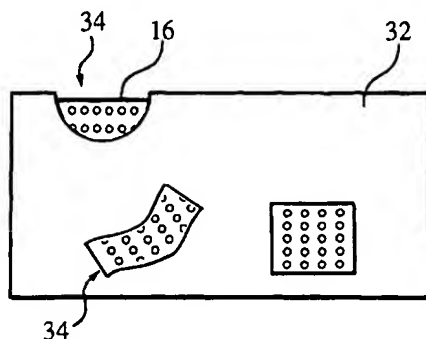


FIG. 3

Kurtz

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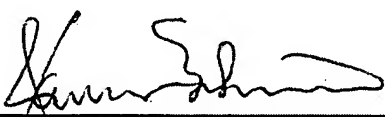
Attorney Docket No.: 05918-294001 / VGCP No. 5040

As none of the cited references disclose or even suggest forming a plurality of lanes having edges, and *joining the lanes side-by-side along their edges to provide a composite polymeric sheet*, as claim 39 requires, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are patentable over the art of record, and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance.

Enclosed is a \$120.00 check for the Extension of Time fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 05918-294001.

Respectfully submitted,

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for Celia H. Leber
Reg. No. 33,524

Reg No
42,276

Fish & Richardson P.C.
225 Franklin Street
Boston, MA 02110
Telephone: (617) 542-5070
Facsimile: (617) 542-8906

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